

Message Text

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44

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 INR-07 L-03

ACDA-05 NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06 TRSE-00

SAJ-01 DODE-00 H-02 NSC-05 SS-15 SAB-01 /085 W

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R 041639Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0061

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION USUN

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 14308

GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, FR, US, XF

SUBJECT: FRENCH VIEWS OF SOVIET ATTITUDES TOWARD THE
MIDDLE EAST (ME)

REF: MOSCOW 7090

1. NEW QUAI DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR THE ME SERVANT, WHO
PARTICIPATED IN HIS PREDECESSOR ROUILLON'S TALKS WITH
THE SOVIETS IN MOSCOW LAST MONTH, DISCUSSED THE SOVIET
ROLE IN THE ME WITH US JUNE 3. WHILE SERVANT
OCCASIONALLY LABELLED HIS COMMENTS "PERSONAL", THEY
PROBABLY REFLECT THE VIEWS OF THE QUAI ME DEPARTMENT.

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2. SERVANT SAID THAT THE SOVIETS BASICALLY DO NOT WANT

A SETTLEMENT IN THE ME. THEY ARE WELL AWARE THAT SOVIET INFLUENCE IN THE REGION WOULD DECLINE WERE PEACE TO BE ACHIEVED. HENCE THEY ARE SATISFIED WITH THE PRESENT NO-WAR, NO-PEACE SITUATION AND WOULD LIKE TO PROLONG IT AS LONG AS POSSIBLE. THIS SOVIET ATTITUDE, AND THE DANGERS OF THE DETERIORATING LEBANESE SITUATION, ARE THE BLEAKEST PARTS OF TODAY'S OTHERWISE NOT TOO GLOOMY ME SCENE.

3. HOWEVER, SERVANT CONTINUED, THE USSR VIEWS THE ME IN THE CONTEXT OF DETENTE, A MUCH MORE IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION IN SOVIET EYES. HENCE THE SOVIETS MUST PLAY A VERY CAUTIOUS GAME IN THE ME, REFRAINING FROM ACTS THAT WOULD CLEARLY THREATEN DETENTE WHILE AT THE SAME TIME, TRYING TO INSURE THAT A SETTLEMENT WILL NOT BE MADE.

4. SERVANT FELT THAT THE SOVIET ATTITUDE TOWARDS GENEVA IS MIXED. ON THE ONE HAND, THE ACCEPTANCE, HOWEVER GRUDGING, BY ALL ORIGINAL PARTICIPANTS OF A RETURN TO GENEVA WHERE AS CO-CHAIRMAN THE USSR WOULD BE RECOGNIZED AS HAVING A VOICE EQUAL TO THE U.S. IN THE REGION, IS GRATIFYING TO THE SOVIETS. ON THE OTHER, THEY ARE AFRAID THAT UNLESS GENEVA IS BETTER PREPARED, THEY WILL SHARE WITH THE US BLAME FROM THE ARABS FOR THE CONFERENCE'S ALMOST CERTAIN FAILURE. IN CONSEQUENCE, THE SOVIETS, ARE IN NO HURRY TO GET THERE. SERVANT HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT THE SOVIETS, IN FACT, ARE NOT OPPOSED TO ANOTHER PRIOR EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI DISENGAGEMENT, PROVIDED IT WERE EVENTUALLY SANCTIFIED AT GENEVA.

5. COMMENTING ON SOVIET ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE THREE ELEMENTS TO BE TAKEN UP AT GENEVA (PARA 5 REFTEL), SERVANT WAS NOT SURE THAT SYTENKO'S REPLY "SIMULTANEOUSLY" MEANT MUCH. HE SAID THAT THE USSR COULD NOT AFFORD TO GIVE THE IMPRESSION THAT IT IS NOT BACKING THE ARABS TO THE HILT. THUS THE SOVIETS MIGHT NOT BE PREPARED TO SUPPORT EVEN MINOR RECTIFICATIONS OF THE 1967 BORDER. IN SUCH A SITUATION, IT IS DIFFICULT TO SEE HOW PROGRESS ON THE OTHER TWO ELEMENTS CAN BE MADE UNTIL ALL

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OCCUPIED TERRITORY IS EVACUATED.

6. SERVANT THOUGHT THE SOVIETS HAD GREATLY APPRECIATED THE ME DISCUSSIONS WITH THE FRENCH (WHOSE POSITIONS ARE SIMILAR) SINCE IT GAVE THEM AN OPPORTUNITY TO BREAK OUT OF THEIR "ISOLATION". HE EXPECTS THEM TO PRESS FOR A NEW ROUND OF ME TALKS IN PARIS THIS FALL.

RUSH

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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